

# MEDIA ACCESS OFFICE NEWS



## Disability Resource to the Entertainment Industry

### M.A.O. MEMBER APPEARANCES

#### Codes:

AL-Leg Amputee      B-Blind  
CP-Cerebral Palsy      D-Deaf  
DD-Developmental Disability  
Ds-Down syndrome  
HI-Hearing Impaired  
ID-Invisible Disability  
LP-Little Person      MI-Mobility Impaired      O-Other  
PWD-Performers With Disabilities  
VI-Visually Impaired      WU-Wheelchair User



### M.A.O. MEMBERS AND OTHER KNOWN PWD WHO ARE SERIES REGULARS/RECURRING

**Michael J. Anderson (LP)** as Samson  
"Carnivale" - HBO

**Deanne Bray (D)** as Sue Thomas  
"Sue Thomas: F.B. Eye" - PAX

**Robert David Hall (AL)** as Coroner Dr. Robbins  
"CSI: Crime Scene Investigation" - CBS

**Anita Hollander (AL)** as Shelley  
"All My Children" - ABC

**Geri Jewell (CP)**  
"Deadwood" - as Jewel - HBO and

"The Young & the Restless" - as Rose - CBS

**Mitch Longley (WU)** as Barry "Bear" Caldwell  
"Joan of Arcadia" - CBS

and as Surveillance Team Member Mitch  
"Las Vegas" - NBC

### 'Regulars' Bios

[Note: 'Regulars' Bios' is an ongoing feature spotlighting those PWDs who have recurring or regular roles on television. Material is either obtained from official web sites and/or the actors themselves. This article concludes the series.]

**Geri Jewell** is best known to millions as "Cousin Geri" from the groundbreaking NBC sitcom, "**The Facts of Life**". She is now featured as the character Jewel in the HBO hit series,

"**Deadwood**", & has also secured a re-occurring role on the hit daytime show, "**The Young and the Restless**".

Geri was born near Buffalo NY and weighed only 3 pounds at birth, spending her first months of life in an incubator. She was diagnosed with cerebral palsy a year later. Her father worked for a cemetery and she and her siblings (two brothers and a younger sister) would often play there on weekends! She studied theatre and psychology in college, and credits Carol Burnett with giving her the advice to never give up her dream of being an entertainer.

Geri started her acting career as the personal choice of producer Norman Lear for her role as Cousin Geri. With this role she became the first person with a visible disability to become a regular performer on a national TV show. During her long run she broke important new ground by addressing issues of disability awareness.

Geri has appeared on numerous comedy cable shows such as A&E's **Evening at the Improv**, VH1's **Spotlight**, and on Comedy Central. She has been interviewed by Phil Donahue, Diane Sawyer, Geraldo Rivera, and even Howard Stern. She appeared in the Emmy award-winning movie, "**Two of a Kind**" with George Burns and Robby Benson & was also in the Emmy winning PBS documentary, "**Look Who's Laughing**". She even once demonstrated her roller-skating skills on "**Sesame St.**"!

Aside from her acting and comedy, she is a powerful motivational speaker and trainer. She has trained at dozens of youth leadership conferences, as well as corporate and government agencies, such as the Department

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of Defense, the CIA, Hewlett Packard, AT&T, and California Edison. In addition to her on-going speaking tours, Geri has performed on the comedy circuit nationwide for over two decades. She has opened for such stars as Paul Anka, Judy Collins and Robert Goulet, and also appeared at the White House and Kennedy Center.

Geri brings to her presentations personal experience of having her behavior and actions misunderstood because of her cerebral palsy. By sharing her disability as her greatest blessing, and revealing insights about the world, Geri turns the focus from disabilities to a true celebration of ability, resulting in an inspiring, empowering and healing experience.

Recently she was the focus of an "Entertainment Tonight" special segment and an article about her appeared in TV Guide just last month. Geri has been a longtime supporter of M.A.O., co-hosting or presenting at many of our Comedy Competitions and Annual Award Shows.

## Congratulations to M.A.O. Members

**Tyler Fortin (CP)**, a comedian from Vancouver BC, Canada, is performing at **Balancing Acts: Calgary's Fourth Annual Disability Arts Festival** on Dec 8th and 9th. For more info, consult their website at <http://www.stage-left.org/festival.htm>. He is also performing at the **Asian & Pacific VSA Arts Festival** Dec 13th in Osaka, Japan. **Max Kerstein (MI)** was on "**Meet the Press**" on Sunday, Nov. 7th. He represented the United States Coast Guard, and his appearance will also air on numerous news cable shows up until Veteran's Day. Max will also be in a Memorial Day commercial for BOEING next May. **Ray Salazar (D)** was hired for an ad for Fila. **Tristan Thunderbolt (D)** was cast in two musical offerings: productions of the opera "**The Medium**" and the show "**Little Shop of Horrors**".

**Reminder to M.A.O. Members** – We would like to have your appearances in film, television & theatre mentioned in the newsletter in a **timely** fashion. Please email [DGordy@edd.ca.gov](mailto:DGordy@edd.ca.gov) with your info by the *third week of the month prior to the month in which you will appear*.

## Important Notice to Parents of M.A.O. Young Performers

Please be sure that if your child is registered with M.A.O. that you possess a current work permit and that the office has RECENT photos/headshots. Too often the office has secured jobs for young performers only to have the offers rescinded due to the child NOT having a valid work permit or no longer looking like their picture. Parents will have till the end of February 2005 to comply with this request, at which time those that did not respond with updated photos, information and a copy of a current work permit will become inactive.

***Thank you very much for your cooperation!***

## HOLLYWOOD NETWORKING BREAKFAST

There is NO Hollywood Networking Breakfast scheduled for December, due to the Holiday Season. Information on the HNB will return next month!

## Attention M.A.O. Writers!

If you consider yourself a writer – whether or not you have actually sold a script – please email Gloria at [Gcastane@edd.ca.gov](mailto:Gcastane@edd.ca.gov) to make sure you are in her 'writers' email file for future announcements of writing opportunities.

## F.Y.I.: Office Hours in December

Please note that during the weeks of Dec. 5 thru Dec. 12, the M.A.O. in North Hollywood will **only** be opened on December 7-8 and 14-15.

December 2004

## Media Access Awards REMINDER

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Media Access Awards, originally planned for late Oct., has been rescheduled for Jan. 14<sup>th</sup>, 2005. Award recipients and confirmed guests include Governor's Award winner Heather Mills McCartney, Michael Landon Award winner Nancy Davis, SAG Award winner Peter Dinklage, Writer's Guild winner Stephen J. Cannell, Director's Guild winner Jack Hofsiss, CSA winner Vicki Huff and MAO Award of Merit winner Laura Gardner. Among the movie and television product award winners being honored are **The Station Agent, Stuck on You, Mean Girls, Saved!, Joan of Arcadia, Carnivale and Smallville.** Gov. Schwarzenegger and First Lady Maria Shriver have been invited, and we are hopeful they will attend. ***Due to space limitations of the venue, and because the Awards show is a fundraiser for the office and its programs, only a very limited number of tickets are being reserved at a reduced rate of \$50 for M.A.O. members, strictly limited to one per person.*** See order form on the back page for details.

## Annual M.A.O. Holiday Open House

It's time for the annual holiday get-together for members and friends of M.A.O. Gather with your fellow performers and entertainment cohorts and share your favorite pot luck dish. Light refreshments will be provided courtesy of our non-profit organization. Contact the office at 818-752-1196 with any questions or concerns.



**WHEN:** Friday, December 17, 2004

**TIME:** 4PM to 8PM

**WHERE:** Media Access Office  
4640 Lankershim Blvd., Suite 305  
North Hollywood, CA 91604

***See you then!***



***Looking for information about us?***  
Get more info about the work of the ***Friends of the California Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities, Inc.*** and the Media Access Office at:  
**[www.disabilityemployment.org](http://www.disabilityemployment.org)**

*Do you have information for the Newsletter?  
Write, phone or fax us at:*

**The Media Access Office**  
**4640 Lankershim Blvd., Suite 305**  
**N. Hollywood, CA 91602**  
**(818) 752-1196 Voice (818) 753-3426 Fax**  
**(818) 753-3427 TTY**

**Media Access Office – North**  
**363 Civic Drive**  
**Pleasant Hill, CA 94523**  
**(925) 602-1542 Voice (925)-602-1540 Fax**  
**711 for CA Relay Service**

### **REACH US VIA E-MAIL:**

Gloria M. Castañeda – [GCastane@edd.ca.gov](mailto:GCastane@edd.ca.gov)  
(Send Gloria an e-mail if you would like to receive last minute M.A.O. information or announcements via email.)

Dr. Douglas Gordy (M.A.O. North) – [DGordy@edd.ca.gov](mailto:DGordy@edd.ca.gov)

The Media Access Office is staffed by the Employment Development Department and the California Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities. Volunteers and in-kind donations through the Friends of the CGCEPD, Inc. support the office. ❖



Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor  
**State of California**

Victoria L. Bradshaw  
Secretary  
**Labor and Workforce Development Agency**

Patrick W. Henning  
Director  
**Employment Development Department**

Norman M. Owen, Esq.  
Chair  
**California Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities**

Catherine Kelly Baird  
Executive Director  
**California Governor's Committee on Employment of People with Disabilities**

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## Get Your Media Access Awards Tickets **NOW!**

The 22<sup>nd</sup> Media Access Awards will be held on Fri., January 14<sup>th</sup> at the Highlands nightclub (at Hollywood & Highland). A **VERY** limited number of tickets will be available to M.A.O. members at the *special reduced price* of \$50, **STRICTLY** one per member, filled on a first come, first served basis. To ensure your attendance at this price, please fill out the coupon below, and mail **ASAP** with your check, made payable to "**Friends of the CGCEPD, Inc.**" If tickets sell out at the reduced price, you will be notified so that you may choose to either purchase a ticket at the full price of \$100, or receive a refund. Any questions, please call (310) 388-4668 for further info.

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Ticket Order Form for Media Access Awards

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

  X   **ONE** ticket at \$50      \_\_\_\_\_ Additional Tickets at \$100

Total Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail form with full payment to: Media Access Awards, c/o Bill York Public Relations, 269 S. Beverly Dr., Suite 307, Beverly Hills, CA 90212.